POETRY.

My Confirmation Promise and Confession

I DO,—
From out my inmost heart, my early vows,
Here in God's Presence, and in this His House,
Before God's Church renew.

I DO
Desire, through life's temptations—cross—pain—
Christ's faithful soldier ever to remain,
And His strait path pursue.

I DO
Bewail each sinful habit, word, and thought
That hath my soul to ill condition brought
Though my Lord's will I knew.

I DO
My Baptism's act confirm and ratify;
And all it pleg'd me to believe, hereby
Humbly assent unto.

I DO
In glad obedience to His Word, to spend
My life in JESUS' Holy Church intend
With purpose strong and true.

I DO
In mute submission, bow this soul of mine,
That God the Holy Ghost, with pow'r Divine,
May thy whole man renew.

I DO
With trembling hope and reverend awe, entreat
Leave to draw near, and at the Mercy-Seat
With hallow'd fervor, in Communion meet
GOD'S faithful chosen few.

I DO
Pray and believe God's love shall with me bide,
His Angels guard me, and His Spirit guide
To all things pure and true.

—*Then*,—should dark tempests brew,
And creedless worldlings strive my faith to mar,
And lure my course from wisdom's precepts far,
Who say—"*they* cannot these high truths receive,"
—O! let *me* but this simple answer give,—

"*I DO!*"

And—when earth fades from view,
Shall not rejoicing seraphs hymn the day
When the Good Spirit moved my lips to say
I DO!

LITERATURE.

FANNY'S FORTUNE.

BY ISA CRAIG-KNOX,

CHAPTER XXI.

FADING.

THE winter had been a mild one. The spring came early. All about the neighbourhood of Park Villas the hedges were greening. Primroses were gleaming in the gardens, and would have been gleaming on the banks, but that it was too near London for the least flower to live in freedom. There was that indescribable sweetness in the air which is felt in spring-time only, though it is no longer the season of the poets. The birds felt it, and sang; the earth felt it, and blossomed. Alas! for those who did not or could not feel it—for the pent-up city children; or the youth cankered and blighted; for the manhood, conscious that a glory had passed away alike from earth without and spirit within.

Lucy Tabor came out of the house and into the high-walled garden, in the sweet March morning, and stood on the steps for a moment listening to the birds, the sunshine bending down her eyelids. Muff jumped about her, and wriggled his fat little body with delight, and started away as if he was saying, "Now for a run." He made one start and came back again, wriggling whining, for his mistress did not move. She used to try races with him down the garden walk, and that was what he wanted now. He looked up in her face and said so—plain as dog could speak.

She understood him perfectly. "No—no, doggie," she said, and shook her head at him sadly. A sparrow lighted on the path and Muff was after it as fast as his little legs would carry him. The bird hopped on to a branch of lilac, and chirped at him, chaffing him unmercifully. He felt it, and came back to his mistress a miserable dog.

Lucy's eyes ran along the ground. On the brown earth the bright spring flowers shone radiantly. Here a cluster of crocuses shot up their tiny flame-spires; there a knot of primroses lay like drops of sunshine, and a solitary snowdrop hung its head between. With a sigh Lucy stooped and gathered it. Then she went down the walk; from spot to spot of blossom, and gathered all she could find. She brought in quite a posy—the firstlings of her flock. Her mamma was in the dining-room still. Mr. Tabor had been gone an hour or more. "See," said Lucy, holding the flowers towards her mother; "and, oh, mamma! to think that they are blooming and that she is fading."

The flowers she had gathered were for Geraldine Lovejoy. As the spring had advanced she had become weaker and weaker, and now the doctor had given it as his private opinion that she would not recover.

Lucy had been deeply interested in Geraldine from the first. She liked her better than she liked Ada, whom she did not quite understand—indeed, it would have been strange if she had for Ada did not in the least understand herself. Geraldine, whose qualities lay more on the surface, loved books and flowers and music, which Ada could not satisfy herself with, because other things were so much more necessary, especially money—which, indeed, could procure them all, and the girl brooded, and was dissatisfied, and restless and eager, and, it seemed, worldly in her eagerness. So Lucy brought Geraldine her favourite books and read them to her, and in the new atmosphere, and her invalid quietude and calm, Geraldine's mind grew like a hot-house plant. Life appeared before her in a totally new aspect, no longer a treadmill round of working to live, and living barren of all nobler result, but a great triumphal progress, leading to all that heart could desire of beauty and good.

Everybody round her, too, was so good, and indeed it seemed as if the little circle of Park Villas had wanted something on which to expend their more unselfish affections, so great was the flow of tenderness towards the fading girl. Lucy was a daily visitor, and Arthur Wildish found his way there in her train, and furnished an enlivening element, especially delighting in drawing out Ada.

For Mrs. Austin Geraldine had developed a strong attachment. Mrs. Austin would bring her costly delicacies, but there was something in Ellen which was more to the girl than these. She had little enough appetite for earthly food; but she had an undefined craving for all spiritual nourishment, and she had fastened upon Mrs. Austin as the one from whom she desired something that the others had not to give. There was something religious in Ellen's aspect which attracted the girl, though no word of formal piety had been spoken between them.

Geraldine, though she knew it not, was fast fading away from earth. At first she had not assumed invalid habits at all, but had gone about the house, with her slight cough and drooping figure, and even crept out in the sunshine, and gone once or twice to church. Then the doctor had forbidden her to go abroad, and she had moved freely from room to room, gradually growing weaker and weaker, until she had to be assisted in that. Then the downward progress was more rapid. A day came when she could not leave her room at all; and another followed when she had to remain in her bed; and still her eyes were not opened. The weather was trying, they said, and if she could only eat and drink and take enough medicine, she might get well when the summer came.

It was to Mrs. Austin that the doctor first spoke his assurance, that all hope was vain; and having broken it to Fanny and the rest, to all indeed with the exception of Ada, even to Mr. and Mrs. Lovejoy, who came about once a week now, it was she who was selected to tell Geraldine herself. They feared to tell Ada first, lest the scene between the sisters should be too painful, and they trusted to Geraldine to soften Ada's grief. Ellen was left alone with her for the purpose, trembling at the task before her and praying that she might have strength to do it tenderly.

"Are you feeling very ill, dear?" she asked, bending over her.

Geraldine looked up at her with eyes grown unnaturally large and bright, and did not speak, but gave a patient smile and little nod for answer.

Ellen went and poured out a cordial, and saying, "Take this, dear," raised and supported her while she drank it.

"Raise me up a little," said Geraldine, "I feel so faint. Often in the night I seem to be sinking, sinking, sinking down through the bed and the floor and the earth. I was feeling it now. I like your arm round me so."

Ellen's heart beat. If she did not tell her now, it would soon be too late. "Would you like some one to pray with you? she asked, touching the girl's forehead with her lips.

Ellen will never forget the look of terror that dawned upon Geraldine's face. Her breath failed, and she sank into a momentary swoon. But Ellen stood fast, upholding her, though unable to keep her tears from falling.

At length Geraldine opened her eyes again and looked up at her, whispering, "Am I so ill? am I going to die?"

"We will try and keep you as long as we can, dear; we love you very much," said Ellen; "but God is calling you away from us; you must trust in His love; you must try and say His will be done."

"Oh! I can't—I can't!" came from the parched lips. "I want to get better, and get up and go home."

"My darling, you are going home to God and to Jesus Christ our Lord. You would not go unwillingly?"

She closed her eyes and did not answer, and Ellen in a low voice repeated the Lord's prayer. Geraldine's face grew calmer, and soon Ellen laid her down like a child asleep. But in a little she woke again with a start and a look of fear, painful to see, and when Ellen would have spoken, she begged her quickly not to speak of that.

They had trusted to her to tell Ada, but she did not. All the day her eyes followed wistfully her sister's every movement; but she spoke little, and not at all of herself.

Mrs. Austin stayed with her that night, and in the night Geraldine's mental suffering increased with the restlessness and exhaustion which generally came on then. Ellen was always by her when she woke from her brief snatches of slumber, always ready to support her in her arms, and to whisper all that she knew of the consoling words of inspiration; but in spite of all, cold dews of terror stood on the girl's forehead. Not only did she cling to life, which had never before seemed so inviting, but she shrank from death, with all the horror of a child who dreads the darkness.

In the morning, after consulting Fanny, Mrs. Austin wrote to Mr. Huntingdon, begging him to come and see Geraldine. The note was sent by a servant who brought back the message that Mr. Huntingdon was not at home.

CHAPTER XXII.

SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT THE HEART.

The first Sunday after his humiliating proposal—or rather non-proposal—Mr. Huntingdon had dreaded the appearance of Mrs. Austin in her pew near the pulpit; he also dreaded her non-appearance. He had to strive hard on first entering the desk to banish her from his mind, and never raised his eyes for a moment during the service. He had been thinking what were her feelings towards him, now that in all probability she had drawn the correct conclusion from his conduct. These thoughts seemed to struggle upwards in his mind, but by great effort and determination he kept them away while he was engaged in the services of the Lord's house.

Once or twice he stumbled in his sermon at some remote allusion to the riches of this world. How dared he measure things by the high, unworldly standard of the Gospel? How should he ever be able to denounce that worldliness which now seemed to him the one thing against which he was called to preach, the thing which above all things was closing men's eyes and hardening their hearts.

The next Sunday came, and Mrs. Austin was not present. She was spending the day in rest, and in sitting with Geraldine, who needed constant attendance now. Mr. Huntingdon tortured himself with her absence, as he had done with her presence. She could not listen to him any more, that was evident. It was quite natural, even justifiable, her falling away from him. What could his ministrations be worth to her? Would not every hearer he had fall away from him if he knew this secret of his?

Mr. Huntingdon did not feel this torture sharply; he might have thrown it off in some way more readily if he had; he felt it in a dull, heavy, constant fashion, and was patient under it, as under a hurt deserved. But he was not like men such as Philip, who can bear their burden alone—nay, in some sort take a savage pleasure in its galling them. He longed for solace under it, for help to bear it—human as well as Divine. And failing to find this, he began to feel ill and depressed beyond measure. He was weak and languid; through all his robustness and ruddiness the fact made itself apparent. He was pale about the lips; and had a withered look. He felt an utter want of energy, a prostration of spirit greater than any he had ever known. He told two gentlemen whom he met coming out of church that he was ill. They said he looked ill, and duly commiserated him. Then they told their wives, who communicated to other wives the interesting intelligence, and the commiseration spread. On Monday inquiries were made at his lodgings. On Tuesday an old lady sent him a parcel of lambs'-wool hosiery with a letter informing him how best to guard himself against the inconstancies of the season, and beseeching him to take care of his throat, in which she had noticed a huskiness. On Wednesday he encountered a bevy of youthful matrons, and was entreated to keep indoors, as the wind was in the east, and he looked really dreadful.

"You are overworking, I am sure," said one, without the faintest notion of what constituted overwork.

"No, not that, at any rate," he answered; "it is possible I may not be working enough."

"Isn't he a dear?" said one to the other when they had bidden him good-bye.

Nevertheless he went home and began to feel "dreadful." He assured himself that he was on the eve of a breakdown, that the energy which had flagged would return no more. Perhaps he might never be allowed to do any more work; he would have to go home, give up his charge, and drag out weary months, or even years in sickness and inaction. And yet when he called in the merry young doctor, who examined him with care, all the satisfaction he got was—"My dear fellow, there's nothing whatever the matter with you. You're sound as a bell—a little out of tone, perhaps, with a slightly relaxed throat, but nothing else."

Privately to himself the doctor remarked, "What cowards those strong healthy fellows are in the matter of disease; but he certainly does look pulled—something wrong with the heart, I fancy," and he laughed knowingly.

But Mr. Huntingdon felt he could endure it no longer, so he packed some things into a black bag, and early next morning went off by train to Norwich. His father and mother with sister Clara lived there in a quiet and unpretending manner. They did not expect him so soon again, for he had very recently paid them a visit, nevertheless they were glad to welcome him—unusually glad. On the last occasion he had come to confide to them the intention he had formed with regard to Mrs. Austin. It was to them a matter of the deepest moment whom he should marry; perhaps they would have been glad if he had remained single for their sakes; but they had not thought of opposing him—nay more, they had heartily wished him success. They had heard his eulogium on Ellen with perfect confidence in the excellence of his choice, and they had awaited with trembling anxiety the result of his proposal, of which he had modestly told them he was by no means sure.

Then had come a letter to Clara, a letter which ran:—

"DEAR CLARA,—Think no more of what I came down to tell you; it has all ended in smoke. You are not going to lose your big fellow after all. You had best make up your mind to keep him altogether. Some day you shall come and be my little housekeeper, and bully me as much as you please. I leave it to you to tell this piece of news to those whom it concerns as lightly as possible.

"Your affectionate
"CHARLEY."

This Clara naturally interpreted into the fact that her brother had met with a refusal, and she could have cried, half for sorrow and half for joy, only she never did cry. The emotions struggled together on her pale, upturned face, and she ended in feeling heartily indignant with the unknown object of her brother's choice, whom she could not in the least realise from that brother's description.

And now here he was again; he had come back to them after his defeat, and they felt doubly tender to him for coming then. He was only going to stay a couple of days, and go back on Saturday, taking Clara with him. Clara longed to go; but she shrank a little from what it involved—of mixing with a new set of people, of meeting the eyes of strangers.

He did not speak of his disappointment to father or mother, neither did they to him. They respected his silence with the delicacy which ruled them in all their dealings with their children. But Clara was in his confidence, and thought that he might like to speak more fully if the ice was broken. She was sitting in the room with him, and he was writing, or trying to write rather, for he walked up and down, or sat with his head in his hands, looked out of the window, or spoke to her—in short, exhibited all the distraction of a man who has to write and cannot.

"Shall I leave you, Charles?" said his sister.

"Yes," he replied; "perhaps I had better be alone. I'm a great humbug, Clara."

"You are no such thing, Charles," said Clara, with an indignant flash from her blue-grey eyes. "Did she say anything very unkind to you?"

"She! Mrs. Austin, you mean? No. What put such a thought in your head?"

"You are only vexed by her refusal."

"She did not refuse me," he said; "I never asked her."

"How was it then?" she inquired innocently; "I don't understand."

"Don't say anything more about it,' he answered.

"Not if you wish it to be so," she said, leaving him, rather puzzled, but greatly mollified towards Mrs. Austin.

He was ashamed that his sister should know how it had come about, and his shame deepened the humiliation; but at length the sermons were written, and packed in their case into the black bag, and the brother and sister returned together.

The first thing they encountered was Mrs. Austin's note. Clara saw the peculiar paleness, which was the sign of strong emotion, deepen round her brother's lips, and his big hand trembled as he took it up. "You won't mind my going at once, Clara?" he said.

"Won't you stay and take a cup of tea first?" she pleaded.

"Look, dear; you won't wish me to stay when you read that." And she did not. A few brief words told that Geraldine was very ill—dying; would he come to her at once? He did not even take off his hat; he went straight out of the house, leaving the note in his sister's hands. Clara was more puzzled than ever, but she looked almost fondly at the little note, and laid it up carefully in his letter-rack.

Mr. Huntingdon went straight to Fanny's. Mrs. Austin was leaving the house as he entered it. It was their first encounter, but Mrs. Austin met him with a simplicity and welcomed him with an earnestness which reassured him. She hurried back into the house to speak with him.

"I was sorry to have been absent when you sent for me," he said. "How is she?"

"There is no change," said Mrs. Austin; "it is terrible to witness her fear of death. Oh! Mr. Huntingdon I am so glad you are come; you may be able to do something for her."

"Thank you for sending for me," he said humbly. "What is it she fears?—God or sin, I mean," he added.

"It is the mere fact of death, I think—of going away from all she loves, of separation from the body."

"Can I go to her now? he asked.

"Yes, I think so. There is another thing I wish to say. There is a younger sister with her, who knows nothing of her danger. We trusted to Geraldine to speak of it herself, but she does not; she will learn it from you perhaps."

"I understand," he said. Then they shook hands and parted; for Fanny, to whom his presence had been made known, came to lead him up-stairs to Geraldine's room.

He sat down by her bed and spoke a few kindly words, which he felt sure she did not hear. She evidently regarded his ministrations as part of the dreadful rite and ceremony of death, and looked at him with dismay. But she was silent. Ada was watching him with wondering eyes. Then he knelt, and Fanny kneeling, signed to Ada to do the same. The attitude and sacred exercise of prayer for a time kept down the girl's rising passion, but at the first direct allusion to her sister's state, she started to her feet, and sobbing her protest against it, flung herself on Geraldine's bed.

Mr. Huntingdon had never witnessed such a scene—such utterly undisciplined moral natures he had never been called to deal with, never before had the awful responsibilities of his position as a minister of religion been forced upon him. He prayed, he entreated, and he stayed till peace was restored, and Ada was sitting holding her sister's hand. "Shall I come again to-morrow?" he asked at parting; and with one voice they answered, "Yes."

It was necessary to procure a nurse for Geraldine, whose nights were very bad. Mrs. Austin and Fanny had shared the task with the servants for a week or two, and they would not hear of Ada sitting up, though she had pleaded hard to be allowed to do so.

Fanny sent for Mrs. Lovejoy to consult her, and she proposed at once, as there was no hope for Geraldine, to take her home. But that Fanny could not allow—besides, Geraldine was really too ill to be removed. Then Mrs. Lovejoy proposed that she should come and nurse her daughter where she was. She arranged it all herself. She was to come every night, and be with Geraldine till morning, getting what rest she could on a couch by her side: in the morning she was to go back to see to Beatrice and her husband, promising also to seek rest at home. But this she did not do. The endurance of Mrs. Lovejoy was perfectly marvellous, and was only equalled by her abstemiousness while under Fanny's roof.

Nevertheless, Fanny was keeping open house for the family, and Philip's anticipations were being rapidly fulfilled. Mr. Lovejoy came every other day, and had begun a system of loans, for which Fanny held certain valuable securities in the shape of I. O. U.'s. With Fanny's money he had even made certain small ventures, which promised magnificent returns. And Fanny went on anticipating her income in the wildest way, only restrained by having to go to Philip for everything, which she felt to be an increasing bondage; and by her grand idea, that capital was not to be touched. She desired more than ever to manage her own affairs in her own way; but she had not the courage to say this to Philip, who, however, was gradually losing all influence over her.

(*To be Continued.*)

CATHOLICITY AT CANTERBURY.

Among "things not generally known" even in this day of universal travel is the existence of a Walloon Church at Canterbury, which meets for divine service in a little chapel in the crypt of the cathedral. This little body of Christians is lineally descended from refugees who came over from France at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and settled at Canterbury, where most of them carried on their trade of silk weaving, which many quaint old houses, with projecting first floors, fast disappearing (a few remain in King-street), testify to. To encourage these humble heroic men, strangers for no fault of theirs in a strange land, and take off some of the bitterness of exile, part of the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral was fitted up for their use, Presbyterian Huguenots though they were; and money raised by Royal brief, to give an endowment for a minister. Thus, while the solemn organ pealing overhead led the voices of worshippers in the more florid Anglican "*use*," a forgiven "Pastor," assisted by his "Elders," said unwritten prayers and explained Scripture in the French tongue. As time went on, in deference to the wishes of some of the Cathedral clergy, these Frenchmen discontinued their extemporary prayers, and substituted therefor the English Prayer-book, translated into Fr[illegible]. Your true Protestant, whether Episcopalian or Presbyterian, is no bigot. At this present time, a score of families descended from these exiles continue to frequent the old Church in the crypt, at least occasionally, though most of them attend also church or chapel, and the minister of the French Church in London comes monthly to preach and administer the Lord's Supper, while the